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Appl. No.: 09/729,051
Applicant(s): Glen G. Bingham, et al.
Filed: December 4, 2000
Art Unit: 3621
Examiner: Bradley B. Bayat
Title: SYSTEM AND METHOD OF RESERVING
MEETING FACILITY RESOURCES

Confirmation No.: 4545

Docket No.: 047138/257581
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**APPEAL BRIEF TRANSMITTAL
(PATENT APPLICATION – 37 C.F.R. § 41.37)**

1. Transmitted herewith is the APPEAL BRIEF in this application, with respect to the Notice of Appeal filed on May 12, 2004.
2. ☐ Applicant claims small entity status.
3. Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 41.20(b)(2), the fee for filing the Appeal Brief is:
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Lorna Morehead

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Confirmation No.: 4545

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APPEAL BRIEF UNDER 37 CFR § 1.192

This Appeal Brief is filed pursuant to the "Notice of Appeal to the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences" filed May 12, 2004.

1. ***Real Party in Interest.***

The real party in interest in this appeal is GetThere, Inc., the assignee of the above-referenced patent application.

2. ***Related Appeals and Interferences.***

There are no related appeals and/or interferences involving this application or its subject matter.

3. ***Status of Claims.***

The present appeal involves Claims 1-28, which are presently under a final rejection as set forth by the Official Action dated November 14, 2003. The claims at issue are set forth in the attached Appendix.

4. ***Status of Amendments.***

No amendments have been filed subsequent to the final Official Action of November 14, 2003.

5. ***Summary of Claimed Subject Matter.***

The present invention provides a method, systems, and network for reserving resources for a meeting. In one embodiment, a communications network includes a meeting package

reservation server **100** that is coupled to, and in communication with, a storage device **110**, and is further in communication with various clients **102**, such as a meeting facility client **104** and meeting planner client **106** through a network **108**, as shown in Figure 1. Page 5, lines 11-15. The meeting package reservation server **100** may include a web server and an application server to provide meeting package reservation functionality to meeting planners. Page 5, lines 19-21. According to one embodiment of the present invention, information communicated between the clients **102** and meeting facility client **104** includes meeting facility criteria and reservation requests for generating meeting packages, while in another embodiment, the information communicated includes reservation rules, reservation quotas, and inventory data associated with a meeting facility, in addition to customer profiles associated with particular meeting planners stored in the storage device **110**. Page 6, lines 15-20.

Referring to Figure 4, a method according to one embodiment of the present invention is illustrated. A user, who is typically a meeting planner utilizing a meeting planner client **106**, first logs in (block **402**) to the meeting planner client. While typically a meeting planner, the user could instead be an employee of a meeting facility, or any other user utilizing the meeting package reservation server **100**. Page 11, lines 8-15. The user then specifies meeting facility criteria (block **404**), and a meeting package is defined (block **406**) based on the meeting facility criteria, where the meeting package necessarily includes both meeting room and guest room meeting facility resources, as well as availability information regarding the meeting facility resources. Page 11, lines 15-19. The meeting facility criteria could include hotel arrival and departure dates, a number of attendees of the meeting or event, the preferred geographic location of the meeting, and/or the desired number of meeting rooms for the event (See Figure 7). Page 14, lines 14-17. The meeting package definition is then displayed to the user for selection (block **408**), although the definition, or a link to a meeting package definition page, could be displayed to a third party, such as a meeting budget coordinator. Page 11, lines 21-23. By way of example, Figure 11 demonstrates that the meeting package definition **1102** could include guest room and meeting room rates, estimated total meeting cost, hotel quality rating for each meeting facility, and an unsatisfied reservation rule. Page 15, lines 12-18. The user may then make a reservation request for the meeting package (block **410**), and each meeting facility resource

associated with the displayed and selected meeting package is reserved in response to the reservation request (block 412). Page 11, line 23-Page 12, line 4). Following the reservation, the meeting facility inventory is updated within the storage device 110 to reflect the change in the availability of the particular meeting facility (block 414), and a confirmation message is sent to the user (block 416). Page 12, lines 4-7.

Figure 5 illustrates a flowchart according to an additional embodiment of the present invention, where the meeting facility criteria from block 404 is entered at block 502, and a customer profile, reservation rule, reservation quota, and meeting facility inventory data are retrieved from the storage device 110 (block 504). Page 12, lines 8-12. The customer profile could be a customer type designation, such as corporate or government, which entitles the user to a discount on meeting facility resources. Page 13, lines 21-23. The reservation rule, such as those shown in Figure 14, may include cut off days, which prohibits the sale of meeting or guest rooms after a specified date, a minimum room reservation requirement for the number of rooms, or a no Saturday arrival requirement, among others. The reservation quota could be a percentage of hotel guest room occupancy or utilization over the date range specified in the meeting facility criteria, or a current annual revenue figure for the associated meeting facility. Page 12, line 20-Page 13, line 1. Finally, the inventory data could include the number of guest rooms and meeting rooms booked and those still available, as shown in Figure 13, which may be received and updated in real-time by the meeting facility client. Page 12, lines 12-14.

When the meeting facility criteria is satisfied, the reservation rules are then applied at block 506 to determine if the meeting facility criteria satisfies the reservation rules (block 508), and if satisfied, the availability of the meeting facility resources is determined using meeting facility inventory data (block 510). Page 12, lines 17-19. If the reservation rules are not satisfied, a determination as to whether the reservation quota is satisfied (block 520) is made, and if satisfied, each unsatisfied reservation rule is displayed for the user (block 522) who is then prompted to adjust the desired meeting facility criteria (block 524) to satisfy the displayed reservation rule or to terminate the process (block 530). Page 12, line 19-Page 13, line 4. If the user wishes to modify the meeting facility criteria, the user may modify the criteria to satisfy an unsatisfied reservation rule(s) (block 526). Page 13, lines 5-7. Further, if the reservation quota

is not satisfied, the unsatisfied reservation rule(s) may be modified (block **528**) to comply with the desired meeting facility criteria, and the availability of the meeting facility resources is determined (block **510**). Page 13, lines 7-12.

Following the determination of availability of meeting facility resources (block **510**), a determination is made as to whether the specified meeting facility resources are available for reservation (block **512**). Page 13, lines 13-15. If available, a meeting package definition is generated using the specified meeting facility resources (block **514**), a price for the defined meeting package is generated based on the customer profile (block **516**), and the process continues at block **408** of Figure 4. Page 13, lines 15-21. If the meeting facility resources are unavailable for reservation, the meeting facility's inventory data is displayed to the user (block **532**) to give the user the option of adjusting the meeting facility criteria (block **534**). Page 13, line 13-Page 14, line 5. Finally, if the user chooses to modify the meeting facility criteria (block **536**), the process is continued to determine if the meeting resources are available for reservation (block **512**), or the process is terminated (block **530**). Page 14, lines 5-8.

As such, the method, systems, and network of the claimed invention allow the user to reserve meeting facility resources for meetings, conferences, conventions, and other group-related events. Furthermore, the present invention may provide the user with real time availability of the meeting facility resources, which allows the user to efficiently reserve available meeting facility resources based on specified meeting facility criteria and modify the criteria if needed.

6. *Grounds of Rejection to be Reviewed on Appeal.*

(i) Claims 1-28 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being incomplete for omitting essential steps and as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter of the invention; and

(ii) Claims 1-28 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over U.S. Patent No. 6,446,045 to Stone et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,926,798 to Carter.

7. *Argument.*

(i) Rejection of Claims 1-28 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph

The Official Action rejected Claims 1-28 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being incomplete for omitting essential steps. For example, the Official Action states that Claim 1 is indefinite as it fails to indicate all parties involved in the transaction. In addition, the Examiner states that certain steps described in Figures 4 and 5 of the present application are omitted from the independent claims, such as a user login step, as well as defining who is responsible for reserving reservation requests.

Although 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, requires that the Applicants distinctly claim the subject matter of his invention, “[t]his does not automatically require inclusion in every claim of every element that is part of the device or its operation.” *Reiffin v. Microsoft Corp.*, 214 F.3d 1342, 1347 (Fed. Cir. 2000) (Newman, P., concurring). “While the specification must of course describe the claimed invention, it is well established that the claims need not include every component that is described in the specification.” *Id.* A rejection for failing to disclose essential matter in the claims is proper only when the specification clearly states that the limitation is essential to practice the invention (*MPEP* §2172.01). Thus, preferred features are not critical or essential, and broad language in the disclosure that omits allegedly critical features weighs against a finding of criticality (*MPEP* §2164.08(c)). Furthermore, a claim may be rejected for failing to point out and distinctly claim the invention when the claim fails to interrelate essential elements as defined by the Applicants in the specification (*MPEP* §2172.01).

Based on the aforementioned, Applicants respectfully submit that no amendments are required to overcome the claim rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. The specification does not otherwise indicate that any steps not included in the claims are essential. Because the specification does not indicate that there are any essential steps missing from the claims, the claims do not need to be amended (See *MPEP* §§ 2164.08(c) and 2172.01).

Although Claims 1, 14, 21 and 28 do not explicitly define all of the parties involved in the transaction, the specification clearly defines the parties and does so with broad language which acts against a determination that the definition of a particular party is critical. The claims currently define the step of receiving a reservation request to be performed by “a user.” Further definition of “a user” is unnecessary since “a user” is broadly defined in the specification. Figure 4 of the present invention illustrates one embodiment, wherein the user is defined as a

meeting planner utilizing a meeting planner client (See Page 11, lines 10-12). Alternatively, the user is defined as an employee of a meeting facility in additional embodiments of the present invention (See Page 11, lines 12-13). Thus, in one embodiment, the user could be a meeting planner acting through a meeting package reservation server to reserve meeting facility resources from a meeting facility.

The claims do not define who or what actually performs the other steps. However, who or what performs these steps is not essential and is not described by the specification as such, so long as they are performed, as the steps could be performed automatically in some cases. Thus, a meeting package reservation server or data processing system could carry out the reserving step in alternative embodiments. In any event, it is apparent from the specification who could potentially make the reservation, although the specification does not designate who or what performs the steps as essential, as would be required to support the current rejection.

Similarly, the initial step of logging in shown in Figure 4 is not an essential step of the present invention. On the contrary, the specification clearly states that Figure 4 is one embodiment of the method of the present invention (See Page 11, lines 9-10), and in Figure 6 a user may provide a username and password in order to gain access to the meeting package reservation server via a meeting planner client when utilizing the method of the present invention (See Page 14, lines 10-13). Logging in to gain access to a server is not essential to the method of Claim 1, as it would be evident to one of ordinary skill in the art that a user could simply access the meeting package reservation server without the initial step of logging in. Logging in is not a novel aspect of the present invention, nor is it a necessary step to carry out the method of the invention, as the specification does not indicate otherwise. Thus, the claims need not recite the step of logging in a user. Furthermore, no other steps shown in Figures 4 or 5 are disclosed as being essential such that no other steps need be recited in Claims 1, 14, 21 and 28.

The Official Action also rejected Claims 1-28 as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter of the invention. In particular, the Examiner finds that Applicants have claimed a meeting room, guest room, and a plurality of meeting facility resources, which are physical locations that cannot be claimed. However, the Examiner indicated that the rejection to the claims would be overcome if the claims were

directed towards information about such physical locations, as opposed to the physical locations themselves.

The Applicants do not find any case law, statute, or other precedent that specifies that “physical locations” may not be claimed. A recent case from the Federal Circuit provides insight into this issue. In *Catalina Marketing Intern v. Coolsavings.com*, 289 F.3d 801 (Fed. Cir. 2002), the court analyzed two independent system claims that included the phrase “remote terminals located at predesignated sites such as consumer stores,” where one of the independent claims included the phrase in the preamble and the other independent claim included the phrase in both the preamble and body of the claim. The Federal Circuit’s discussion was weighted towards determining whether the phrase in the preamble was a limitation of the claim, and did not even discuss the fact that the claims included physical locations, *i.e.*, consumer stores. Moreover, in the court’s infringement analysis, the defendant was held to not literally infringe because it did not “designate (or even recognize) the physical position” of the terminal. *Id.* at 812. In this regard, it is clear that the Federal Circuit has imposed no prohibition on claiming physical locations and does not cite to any precedent indicating otherwise.

Furthermore, the specification of the present application clearly states that a meeting package includes multiple meeting facility resources, such as hotel guest rooms, meeting rooms, or food and beverage service for a meeting facility. Page 3, lines 24-25. In a consistent manner, independent Claims 1, 14, 21, and 28 include the terms meeting room, guest room, and meeting facility resources to further define a meeting package. In addition, the independent claims state that the meeting package definition not only includes meeting facility resources but also availability information regarding the meeting facility resources, and the definition of the meeting package could include additional information, such as guest room rates, meeting room rates, estimated total meeting cost, and hotel quality rating, as illustrated in Figure 11 of the present invention (See Page 15, lines 14-18). Thus, the claims use the physical locations of the meeting room, guest room, and meeting facility resources only to further define a meeting package, and information regarding the availability of such locations must also be defined before a reservation may be made based on a reservation request. As such, the independent claims are not vague and instead are consistent with the specification to define a meeting package as not

just information, but also meeting facility resources. Moreover, Applicants submit that the claims may properly define a meeting package to not just include information, but also the rooms themselves, as there is no prohibition preventing a physical location from being claimed.

The Examiner also indicated that the term "guest room" was vague and indefinite. As described by way of example in the specification, a guest room would be clearly understood by one skilled in the art as a room for lodging that is typically rented by a guest (*e.g.*, hotel guest room). See Page 3, lines 24-25. Therefore, a guest room as used in the claims is not vague.

Thus, Applicants submit that Claims 1-28 are acceptable and definite within 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, and that the rejection of Claims 1-28 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, is overcome.

- (ii) Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 6,446,045 to Stone et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,926,798 to Carter

The Official Action also rejects Claims 1-28 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over U.S. Patent No. 6,446,045 to Stone et al. ("Stone '045 patent") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,926,798 to Carter ("Carter '798 patent").

The Stone '045 patent discloses a method for using computers to facilitate and control the creating of a plurality of functions. In particular, the Stone '045 patent discloses inventory control and management and global updating and accessibility of real-time and time-sensitive inventory. In one embodiment of the Stone '045 patent, various fields in a Presentation Database may be presented for lodging facilities to assist in the presentation and sale of lodging, such as facility description, room description, meeting rooms, etc. (See Col. 17, lines 15-25). The buyer may then, for example, request a room reservation, which prompts a negotiation mode if the room is not available. The program may then suggest alternative accommodations, and if no alternatives are met, the buyer is referred to find other lodging possibilities. When the buyer has successfully chosen a room that a Transaction Negotiation Program accepts, the room is put on hold until the buyer provides additional information to make the reservation (See Col. 35, lines 33-62).

The Carter '798 patent discloses a method and apparatus for performing computer-based on-line commerce using an intelligent agent. An "intelligent agent" is defined as a computer program that may simulate a human relationship by doing something that another person could otherwise do for you, such as negotiating deals with a supplier for a buyer (See Col. 2, lines 54-57). The Carter '798 patent discloses that a client computer may issue a commercial request, and a plurality of server computers are available to service the request. In a preferred embodiment, the request issued by a client computer comprises a group of inter-related sub-requests. The intelligent agent acts for the buyer to review content-related information (*e.g.*, price or availability) and business policies (*e.g.* cancellation conditions) of each server computer to make a decision as to which server should serve the request or sub-request. Once the intelligent agent decides on a specific server, commitments that are more easily cancelled are made first, and commitments more difficult to cancel are made last. For example, if a buyer wishes to book a flight, parking at an airport, hotel, car rental and restaurant reservations, the intelligent agent checks several servers that specifically provide these services, and analyzes content-related information and business policies for each server. The agent makes a preliminary decision as to which server will be used for each service, and then books particular services based on that server's cancellation policy.

It is initially submitted that the Carter '798 patent cannot properly be combined with the Stone '045 patent. In order to properly combine references, a teaching or motivation to combine the references is essential. *In re Fine*, 337 F.2d 1071, 1075 (Fed. Cir. 1988). In fact, the Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit has stated that, "[c]ombining prior art references without evidence of such a suggestion, teaching, or motivation simply takes the inventor's disclosure as a blueprint for piecing together the prior art to defeat patentability -- the essence of hindsight." *In re Dembiczak*, 175 F.3d 994 (Fed. Cir. 1999). Although the evidence of a suggestion, teaching, or motivation to combine the references commonly comes from the prior art references themselves, the suggestion, teaching, or motivation can come from the knowledge of one of ordinary skill in the art or the nature of the problem to be solved. *Id.* In any event, the showing must be clear and particular and "[b]road conclusory statements regarding the teaching effect of multiple references, standing alone, are not 'evidence'." *Id.*

In the present application, the requisite motivation or suggestion to combine the Carter '798 patent with the Stone '045 patent is lacking. In this regard, the Stone '045 patent is premised on allowing sellers to present their inventory, products, goods, and services in a choice of one or a variety of media outlets. The seller may create a presentation for each media outlet for the sale of products, goods, and services for a variety of businesses, where the presentation is accessible electronically by the buying public to make a purchase. Conversely, the Carter '798 patent is directed to an intelligent agent that acts on behalf of a client, where a plurality of servers are available to service a request by the client. Thus, each of the Stone '045 patent and the Carter '798 patent is directed to solving a different problem, where the Stone '045 patent is concerned with accommodating the seller, while the Carter '798 patent is concerned with accommodating the buyer. Moreover, there is no suggestion in either the Stone '045 patent or Carter '798 patent to combine the references, and the nature of the problem to be solved is different for each patent. Therefore, there is no teaching or suggestion to combine the Carter '798 patent with the Stone '045 patent.

a. Claims 1 to 27

Even if the references were to be combined, however, the combination of the references does not teach or suggest the claimed invention. In this regard, in contrast to the disclosures of the Stone '045 and Carter '798 patents, independent Claims 1, 14, and 21 recite a method and systems, respectively, in which a meeting package including a plurality of meeting facility resources and availability information regarding the meeting facility resources is defined. The plurality of meeting facility resources include at least a meeting room and a guest room of a meeting facility. None of the aforementioned references, alone or in combination, teach or suggest reserving a plurality of meeting facility resources (as defined by the claims) in response to receiving a reservation request based on a meeting package definition.

Specifically, the Stone '045 patent only discloses reserving a specific room type, and does not teach or suggest reserving a plurality of meeting facility resources including at least one meeting room and guest room based on a meeting package definition, as recited in Claims 1 and 14. Although the Carter '798 patent discloses an intelligent agent that may act on behalf of a buyer in online commerce, Carter does not teach or suggest reserving a plurality of meeting

facility resources based on a meeting package definition, which include both a meeting room and a guest room of a meeting facility, as recited in Claims 1 and 14. Similarly, neither of the Stone '045 or Carter '798 patents teach or suggest a storage device for storing a meeting package definition that includes both a meeting room and a guest room and a data processing system having a processing device to create the meeting package definition that also includes availability information regarding meeting facility resources, as recited by Claim 21.

For the forgoing reasons, neither the Stone '045 patent or the Carter '798 patent, alone or in combination, teach or suggest the method, data processing system-readable medium, or data processing system of independent Claims 1, 14, and 21, respectfully. Thus, the rejection of these claims, as well as the claims that depend therefrom is overcome.

b. Claim 28

Independent Claim 28 is also rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over the Stone '045 patent in view of the Carter '798 patent. Claim 28 is directed to a communications network that includes a meeting package reservation server coupled to a meeting planner client that is capable of creating a meeting package definition. In particular, the meeting package reservation server creates a meeting package definition that includes both a meeting room and a guest room using information stored in a data storage device. As recited in Claim 28, the data storage device stores a customer profile for the user, a reservation rule, and inventory data for the meeting facility.

As stated previously, there is no teaching or suggestion to combine the Carter '798 patent with the Stone '045 patent. In any event, the communications network of Claim 28 is patentably distinct from the Stone '045 and Carter '798 patents, taken either individually or in combination, for at least the same reasons described above with respect to Claims 1, 14, and 21. That is, the cited references, even if taken in combination, fail to teach or suggest reserving a plurality of meeting facility resources, including both a meeting room and a guest room, in response to receiving a reservation request based on a meeting package definition. Additionally, the Stone '045 and Carter '798 patents do not teach or suggest a communications network that includes a meeting package reservation server coupled to a meeting planner client that is able to create a

meeting package definition using a customer profile, a reservation rule, and inventory data, as further recited by Claim 28.

In particular, the Stone '045 patent does not teach or suggest that the meeting package definition is created using a reservation rule. As indicated in the *Summary of the Invention*, the reservation rules, such as those shown in Figure 14, may include cut off days, which prohibits the sale of meeting or guest rooms after a specified date, a minimum room reservation requirement for the number of rooms, or a no Saturday arrival requirement, among others. The Examiner cites to Figures 2a-e and the associated text of the Stone '045 patent, with the text describing a Presentation Rules Database for the disclosure of the use of a reservation rule. However, the Presentation Rules Database is directed to the "style, look, and feel" of the seller's presentation by using different presentation formatting guidelines and rules for the targeted directories or indexes (Col. 5, lines 15-20). Furthermore, the Stone '045 patent discloses that the Presentation Rules Database includes data fields containing information that controls and limits the style and editing of the presentations (Col. 17, lines 46-49). As such, the rules disclosed in the Stone '045 patent do not teach or suggest applying reservation rules that must be satisfied by the user-input meeting facility criteria before defining a meeting package, as the Presentation Rules Database is concerned only with the appearance of the seller's presentation.

Likewise, the Carter '798 patent nowhere teaches or suggests a communications network that includes a meeting package reservation server coupled to a meeting planner client that is able to create a meeting package definition using a customer profile, a reservation rule, and inventory data, as recited by Claim 28. In fact, the Carter '798 patent does not teach or suggest storing reservation rules, as defined above. In this regard, although the Carter '798 patent discloses that the intelligent agent reviews the business policies of each server, where the business policies could include the price, quality, or cancellation policies of each server (Col. 7, lines 7-9 and 17-19), the business policies are not predefined reservation rules that must be satisfied before the intelligent agent books the client's request, as per independent Claim 28.

Therefore, the communications network of independent Claim 28 is not taught or suggested by the cited references, taken either individually or in combination, for at least the

reasons described above. Thus, the rejection of independent Claim 28 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) is also overcome.

CONCLUSION

For the above reasons, it is submitted that the final rejection of Claims 1-28 is erroneous and reversal of the rejection is respectfully requested. An Appendix containing a copy of claims involved in the appeal is attached.

Respectfully submitted,

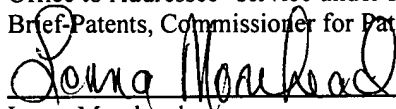


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Lorna Morehead

APPENDIX

Claims on Appeal

1. (Previously Presented) A method comprising:

defining a meeting package including a plurality of meeting facility resources and availability information regarding the meeting facility resources, said plurality of meeting facility resources including a meeting room and a guest room of a meeting facility;

receiving a reservation request for said meeting package from a user; and

reserving each of said plurality of meeting facility resources in response to receiving said reservation request.
2. (Previously Presented) The method as set forth in claim 1, further comprising:

defining a customer profile for said user, wherein defining a meeting package comprises determining a price for said meeting package at least partially based on said customer profile.
3. (Original) The method as set forth in claim 1, further comprising:

storing inventory data for said meeting facility, wherein defining a meeting package comprises:

determining whether each of said plurality of meeting facility resources is available for reservation utilizing said inventory data; and

displaying said inventory data for said meeting facility in response to a determination that each of said plurality of meeting facility resources is not available for reservation,

and further wherein reserving each of said plurality of meeting facility resources in response to receiving said reservation request comprises:

reserving each of said plurality of meeting facility resources in response to a determination that each of said plurality of meeting facility resources is available for reservation.

4. (Original) The method as set forth in claim 3, wherein reserving each of said plurality of meeting facility resources in response to receiving said reservation request further comprises updating said inventory data.

5. (Original) The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein:
defining a meeting package comprises defining a meeting package for each of a plurality of meeting facilities; and
receiving a reservation request for said meeting package from a user comprises receiving a user selection of one of said plurality of meeting packages.

6. (Original) The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein reserving each of said plurality of meeting facility resources comprises transmitting a confirmation message to said user.

7. (Original) The method as set forth in claim 1, further comprising:
receiving meeting facility criteria including a preferred meeting date, a guest room quantity, and a meeting room quantity, wherein defining a meeting package comprises defining said meeting package based on said meeting facility criteria.

8. (Original) The method as set forth in claim 7, further comprising:

defining a reservation rule for said meeting facility, wherein defining a meeting package based on said meeting facility criteria comprises:

determining whether said meeting facility criteria satisfy said reservation rule; and

identifying said reservation rule to said user in response to a determination that said meeting facility criteria do not satisfy said reservation rule.

9. (Original) The method as set forth in claim 8, wherein defining a meeting package based on said meeting facility criteria further comprises:

modifying one of said meeting facility criteria in response to a determination that said meeting facility criteria do not satisfy said reservation rule; and

defining said meeting package based on said modified meeting facility criterion.

10. (Original) The method as set forth in claim 9, wherein modifying one of said meeting facility criteria comprises:

prompting said user to adjust said meeting facility criteria; and

receiving an adjusted meeting facility criterion in response to said prompting.

11. (Original) The method as set forth in claim 7, further comprising:

defining a reservation rule for said meeting facility, wherein defining a meeting package based on said meeting facility criteria comprises:

determining whether said meeting facility criteria satisfy said reservation rule; and

modifying said reservation rule in response to a determination that said meeting facility criteria do not satisfy said reservation rule.

12. (Original) The method as set forth in claim 11, further comprising:
defining a reservation quota for said meeting facility, wherein modifying said reservation rule comprises:

determining whether said reservation quota is satisfied; and
modifying said reservation rule in response to a determination that said reservation quota is not satisfied.

13. (Original) The method as set forth in claim 7, wherein:
receiving meeting facility criteria comprises receiving food and beverage information;
and

defining a meeting package based on said meeting facility criteria comprises defining a meeting package including a plurality of meeting facility resources, said plurality of meeting facility resources including food and beverage service.

14. (Previously Presented) A data processing system-readable medium having a plurality of instructions executable by a data processing system embodied therein, wherein said instructions when executed cause said data processing system to:

define a meeting package including a plurality of meeting facility resources and availability information regarding the meeting facility resources, said plurality of meeting facility resources including a meeting room and a guest room of a meeting facility;

receive a reservation request for said meeting package from a user; and
reserve each of said plurality of meeting facility resources in response to receiving said reservation request.

15. (Previously Presented) The data processing system-readable medium of claim 14, wherein:

said plurality of instructions when executed further cause said data processing system to define a customer profile for said user, and

said instructions causing said data processing system to define a meeting package cause said data processing system to determine a price for said meeting package at least partially based on said customer profile.

16. (Original) The data processing system-readable medium of claim 14, wherein:

said plurality of instructions when executed further cause said data processing system to store inventory data for said meeting facility,

said instructions causing said data processing system to define a meeting package cause said data processing system to:

determine whether each of said plurality of meeting facility resources is available for reservation utilizing said inventory data; and

display said inventory data for said meeting facility in response to a determination that each of said plurality of meeting facility resources is not available for reservation, and

said instructions causing said data processing system to reserve each of said plurality of meeting facility resources in response to receiving said reservation request cause said data processing system to:

reserve each of said plurality of meeting facility resources in response to a determination that each of said plurality of meeting facility resources is available for reservation.

17. (Original) The data processing system-readable medium of claim 14, wherein:
said plurality of instructions when executed further cause said data processing system to receive meeting facility criteria including a preferred meeting date, a guest room quantity, and a meeting room quantity, and

said instructions causing said data processing system to define a meeting package cause said data processing system to define said meeting package based on said meeting facility criteria.

18. (Original) The data processing system-readable medium of claim 17 wherein:
said plurality of instructions when executed further cause said data processing system to define a reservation rule for said meeting facility, and

said instructions causing said data processing system to define a meeting package based on said meeting facility criteria cause said data processing system to:

determine whether said meeting facility criteria satisfy said reservation rule; and
identify said reservation rule to said user in response to a determination that said meeting facility criteria do not satisfy said reservation rule.

19. (Original) The data processing system-readable medium of claim 17 wherein:
said plurality of instructions when executed further cause said data processing system to
define a reservation rule for said meeting facility, and
said instructions causing said data processing system to define a meeting package based
on said meeting facility criteria cause said data processing system to:
determine whether said meeting facility criteria satisfy said reservation rule; and
modify said reservation rule in response to a determination that said meeting
facility criteria do not satisfy said reservation rule.

20. (Original) The data processing system-readable medium of claim 19, wherein:
said plurality of instructions when executed further cause said data processing system to
define a reservation quota for said meeting facility, and
said instructions causing said data processing system to define a meeting package based
on said meeting facility criteria further cause said data processing system to:
determine whether said reservation quota is satisfied; and
modify said reservation rule in response to a determination that said reservation
quota is not satisfied.

21. (Previously Presented) A data processing system comprising:
a storage device to store a meeting package definition for a meeting package including a
plurality of meeting facility resources, said plurality of meeting facility resources including a
meeting room and a guest room of a meeting facility;
an input device; and

a processing device to create said meeting package definition that includes availability information regarding the meeting facility resources, to receive a reservation request for said meeting package from a user via said input device, and to reserve each of said plurality of meeting facility resources in response to receiving said reservation request.

22. (Previously Presented) The data processing system as set forth in claim 21, wherein:

said storage device comprises a storage device to store a customer profile for said user, and

said processing device comprises a processing device to determine a price for said meeting package at least partially based upon said customer profile.

23. (Original) The data processing system as set forth in claim 21, further comprising a display device; wherein:

said storage device comprises a storage device to store inventory data for said meeting facility, and

said processing device comprises a processing device to:

determine whether each of said plurality of meeting facility resources is available for reservation utilizing said inventory data;

display said inventory data for said meeting facility via said display device in response to a determination that each of said plurality of meeting facility resources is not available for reservation; and

reserve each of said plurality of meeting facility resources in response to a determination that each of said plurality of meeting facility resources is available for reservation.

24. (Original) The data processing system as set forth in claim 21, wherein:

said processing device comprises a processing device to receive meeting facility criteria including a preferred meeting date, a guest room quantity, and a meeting room quantity via said input device, and to create said meeting package definition based upon said meeting facility criteria.

25. (Original) The data processing system as set forth in claim 24, further comprising a display device, wherein:

said storage device comprises a storage device to store a reservation rule for said meeting facility, and

said processing device comprises a processing device to:

determine whether said meeting facility criteria satisfy said reservation rule; and

display said reservation rule to said user via said display device in response to a determination that said meeting facility criteria do not satisfy said reservation rule.

26. (Original) The data processing system as set forth in claim 24, wherein:

said storage device comprises a storage device to store a reservation rule for said meeting facility, and

said processing device comprises a processing device to:

determine whether said meeting facility criteria satisfy said reservation rule; and

modify said reservation rule in response to a determination that said meeting facility criteria do not satisfy said reservation rule.

27. (Original) The data processing system as set forth in claim 26, wherein:
said storage device comprises a storage device to store a reservation quota for said meeting facility, and
said processing device further comprises a processing device to:
determine whether said reservation quota is satisfied; and
modify said reservation rule in response to a determination that said reservation quota is not satisfied.

28. (Previously Presented) A communications network comprising:
a meeting planner client to receive meeting facility criteria and a reservation request for a meeting package including a plurality of meeting facility resources from a user, said plurality of meeting facility resources including a meeting room and a guest room of a meeting facility;
a data storage device to store a customer profile for said user, a reservation rule and inventory data for said meeting facility, and a meeting package definition for said meeting package; and
a meeting package reservation server coupled to said meeting planner client via said communications network to create said meeting package definition utilizing said customer profile, said reservation rule, and said inventory data, to display said meeting package definition to said user, wherein said meeting package definition includes availability information regarding

the plurality of meeting facility resources, and to receive said reservation request from said user via said meeting planner client, and to reserve each of said plurality of meeting facility resources in response to receiving said reservation request.